

**VILLAGE OF SOUTH BLOOMING
GROVE
REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY
MARCH 28, 2022
8:00PM**

➤ **Call to order**

Mayor Kalaj called to order the Village Board Meeting at 8:03pm on March 28, 2022, via Zoom Webinar ID: 862 203 12293 for the Village of South Blooming Grove located at 819 State Route 208, within the Village of South Blooming Grove, and having a mailing address of Monroe, New York.

➤ **Roll call**

The following persons were present:

- Mayor's George Kalaj – Mayor
- Abraham Weiss – Deputy Mayor
- Yitzchok Feldman– Trustee
- Asher Guttman - Trustee
- Zalmon Rosner – Trustee
- Joel Stern- Confidential Assistant to the Mayor
- Isaac Ekstein – Legislative Aide to Mayor
- Scott Ugell Esq.- Village Attorney

Absent

- Al Fusco, Village Engineer

➤ **Mayor Comments:**

- There was a water main break on Stonegate Drive that was taken care of, we didn't need to truck any water in, so that is good news. We have an issue with Well No. 4, we called somebody and they will start working on it tomorrow to pull a pump out of there. Therefore, we do have issues with that well. Reminding the public, please do not flush any unflushable items, it is causing us a lot of headaches, he has been stressing it and telling the public this constantly. It helps yourself and the whole village. We just replaced a pump and it cost the village a lot of money. It can be avoided.

➤ **Correspondence:**

- Clovewood Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) has been received but not yet accepted, it is out with the experts. **Attorney Ugell** stressed to everyone that given that it was just received and still being reviewed by the experts, no decision has been made, it is just on tonight to let everyone be aware that it has been received, but we have not public comment or discussion about that tonight, it is just an item for people to know.
- Memorandum from Treasurer transferring \$55,000 from general fund to the water operating account.
- Memorandum from the Village Clerk to attend NYCOM Training May 4-6, 2022
- 3.28.2022 email from Joel Stern, UJC Board Representative.

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➤ **Public Comments**

- **Sue Anne Vogelsberg** she did not receive an invitation to the grand opening of the new ambulance building, but if it is a private business versus a community service, perhaps that's why, although including all the residents it does help to generate good will. The \$30.00 for the household spring clean-up, she spoke to the town receiver of taxes today, who coordinates the garbage pick-up, and she said that this is something special for the village and it is not for the town, she doesn't want to be charged for this, because she doesn't need it, so she want to be sure that only the people that are going to using that are going to be getting billed. 206 Prospect continues to operate as a school, so far there is still no permit as of October 4, 2021. 185 Prospect continues to operate as an Airbnb, bus she couldn't find any codes listed. She emailed a flyer from the chair of Blooming Grove Clean, the annual event will be Saturday, April 23 and Sunday the 24th and she asks if the flyer could be posted on the website and the Facebook page and lastly, per government guidelines and this is quoted "religious displays on public property can be legal but they must pass constitutional muster by not violating the first amendments establishment clause which requires government neutrality towards religion." The village is not practicing neutrality towards religion by continuing to display a menorah outside village hall. She requests it be removed immediately from in front of our municipal building, perhaps a better location for this item would be in front of the new ambulance building that was funded by the United Jewish Community of Blooming Grove. **Isaac Ekstein** advised that there was no grand opening with UJC, there will be a grand opening where everybody is going to be invited. There was an event there which people named it grand opening, for whatever reason they decided, the UJC has not done a grand opening as of yet, as the building is not 100% sure. Rest assured we will invite everyone to that grand opening. The garbage pick up is as you see it on the agenda, it is a spring special cleaning that the village is proposing to do, it has nothing to do with the town as the town provider has denied doing that for whatever reason, so we had to look for a different provider to do those special pick-ups and it is not going to be charged to you, the village is paying for that from their budget. As far as the Menorah, thank you for that and we will have Delfino remove that, it is way overdue. **The Mayor** advised that the Menorah is staying at village hall as it is the villages and has been there for years. **Mr. Ekstein** it will go back to the garage.
- **Ann Marie Breheny** she is confused about the water main break again at Stonegate Drive. We were notified the day before that it was going on and it wasn't addressed until the day after and then we got a no boiling notification hung in our hallways. **Mr. Ekstein** advised that Rolling Hills was notified right away, we were working on it right away, it wasn't losing that much water to make it an emergency to spend the extra money. When you do something as an emergency, it costs you twice or three times that amount of money. They took their time because they weren't losing that much water that the village could sustain. As soon as they were able to repair it, they put out the notices. **Clerk** explained that the first notice received was from Rolling Hills and their calling system. The village knew that it would be repaired the next day and sent the call out according to time of the repair. Additionally, some residents asked for more time so they could be prepared for having no water. The first message received was from Rolling Hills.

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- **Dawn Salka** she is only seeing one person at a time speaking, instead of seeing the entire board as we have in the past. **Mr. Ekstein** it is a setting on your Zoom. **Mrs. Salka** listed on the agenda you have correspondence, then public comments so I really can't ask a question or make a comment on anything that is going to be discussed because it hasn't been brought up yet and I know no one is allowed to get called on a second time. This has been asked multiple times and via email, what are the numbers 1 through 10 on Route 208 across from the strip mall and what are the plans for the golf course where there is a gaping hole in the fence now in place. **Mr. Ekstein** knows that the building inspector has been in contact with the property owner of wherever the 1 through 10 is and he will check in with them tomorrow if they have any conclusions and he will notify Kerry so that she can reach out to you with an update. About the fence, that is not on the golf course, that is actually on the next property for the SBG Business Park which was recently approved by the planning board and they received a permit to tree drop, so they put a fence up by their property.
- **Kristie Johnson** she wanted to mention that it seem more recently than ever the water issued in the village have become increasingly worse despite this upgraded filtration system but she doesn't think it has anything to do with that, we have a lot of water main breaks. She feels like this is the third time in as many months that she is hearing about rolling hills being without water. She is hoping that is not an issue, is this main breaking in the same spot or are we having fractures along the way and what is being done to take care of that. She noticed that the resolutions for tonight about allowing the mayor to enter contract, something about maintenance, but she doesn't understand how we are already at contact, she didn't see anything about opening the job for bids and she feels like it would be more fiscally responsible to open this up to bids for local contractors instead of just picking this company. What work is being done on Arlington Road, this is another area that apparently is being clear cut and she want to caution the board again, how many acres of trees have we lost? This is an area that is known for the habitat for endangered species. The clear disregard for the trees and the environment and the very delicate ecosystem that we share here is alarming and ...that this board is more about furthering the interest of developers than it is of the people that live here. She has kids, she has another one on the way, she needs these bats, they kill disease carrying mosquitos and this is for all of us, a lot of people especially on this board, have had children recently, have young babies, expectant mothers can be effected by these disease carrying mosquitos, it doesn't seem like an issue now because we had the bats in the area but with all this clear cutting and the decline in the bat population, she guarantees you that it will become a problem for all of us and then what? We are going to fill their lungs with poison to kill mosquitos. We really need to think ahead. Also for this ambulance building, she wants to know, she understand, she heard Mr. Ekstein state that the building wasn't complete, and she is glad to hear that because she has yet to see plans for that second floor or any inspections done for that second floor and it concerns her, she is worried about things like fire grading and other safety concerns. That is a particularly small building there are only so many ways you can get out, she is guessing there has to be at least two exits from that second floor, but if a fire breaks out it could just be hazardous for everyone and she wants to make we are all playing it safe and playing by the rules. Arlington is the only one she can think of right now of work being done without permission, of course the ambulance house was kinda done and it seems like it was done without permission, but if it is not completed and we are gonna back

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track and do it right then that's great. **Issac Ekstein** replied that the water main breaks by the Rolling Hills unfortunately, you are probably aware, that the infrastructure for our water system is very, very much outdated and that is one of the reasons the village is currently in the process of applying, has applied, has submitted documents waiting for submissions and stuff like that and Mr. Fusco is working on to obtain a grant to overhaul the entire water system. This has nothing to do with the filtration plant that was done, this is the season, it is not only the season it happens all the time where these pipes get broken unfortunately, he wishes there was a remedy to stop that but we haven't found that remedy besides overhauling the whole thing, hopefully we will get approved for a grant to do that. As far as the bids, Kerry if you can interject what exactly was done with that contract, but I know confidentially that Kerry and the staff in the village are following the procurement policy that the village has adopted. **Kerry** we have used the same company, it has changed names a few times since she began with the Village to treat Merriewold Lake, there aren't very many contractors that do such a thing. It is a very small lake, this is the only company that I am aware of and this is what we use every year, every year we go into a contract with Solitude Lake, it has been under a few different names in the past, they come up, assess the lake and they treat it accordingly and they send out for licensing through the NYDEC, this is what we have done. There are not many companies, and it is under \$5,000 and we get charged as it is treated if necessary after they assess the lake. **Mr. Ekstein** advised it follows the procurement policy. He addressed Arlington, this has been discussed a couple of times, they are preparing the wells to be brought into the village water system and they have received a permit from the Building Inspector to tree drop whatever is allowed by the DEC whenever it is allowed. They are following strict guidelines from the DEC on everything that they are doing and the building inspector is closely monitoring that situation. The UJC Building that you spoke about, the ambulance garage, they have received permits from the building inspector whenever they started, they didn't get a CO yet, they are not fully done yet.

- **Gloria Gelletich** the spring clean up charge that the Mayor is proposing, she thinks you have to look at the history of the village, we originally would purchase monthly our own village pick up, she thinks it was \$30 at that time, the village went into getting the contract to have it put on our taxes, which we are paying \$180-200 per year. She does not want an additional \$30.00 to pay on what her yearly taxes are, she is on a fixed income, the \$30 is important to her and maybe you should exclude senior citizens on that but also too the garbage company agreement is that from April through December they will take one item a week in addition to your garbage can and your recyclables. If somebody has a problem with that, she believes they can hire their own carting company to pick up stuff as opposed to having other resident that don't need that service. She finds that she is fine with one item per week. Let them pay it on their own.
- **Barbara Hanley** while she is not in the least convenience there will be sufficient water for South Blooming Grove and Clovewood, should approval be granted? Clearly the water situation would have resolved and we in South Blooming Grove will be cleared to power wash our home without purchasing additional water from the company doing the work and we will be cleared to water our lawns as well as our cars. She will be very enthusiastic and in addition, she agrees with the woman

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who has just spoken about the \$30.00 charge. If you want to exclude us senior citizens that works for her too.

- **Patty Morrice** Mr. Mayor she wanted you to know your planning board gave false information to your residents on the 24th, we were told Arlington Drive was an access road to Clovewood. She went up there today, the land is cleared for as far as the eye can see, Clovewood plans have not passed, wells have not passed, why clear the land before any of this has passed. If it doesn't pass, are the trees going to be replaced. Do we know what the numbers on the fence is for? Is it village property? If no one knows by now please take them down.

➤ **Comments**

- **Joel Stern** would like to elaborate on the correspondence that he sent in today. He sent in a letter on behalf of the UJC today and he read the letter and asked the Mayor and the Board of Trustees to take immediate action. **The Mayor** clarified to the public that this will be 24/7 service. Verbal Resolution followed, see below.
- **Trustee Feldman** asked if the special garbage pick up was a one time thing because the garbage piles up. **Mr. Ekstein** advised that we are lucky right not with the contract that we have with IWS, he believes we are paying very, very low according to the garbage prices right now on the market. Making a new contract, adding multiple day pick-ups is crazy for now. Whenever the contract with Town is going to expire and they will need to renegotiate, we will revisit at that time. On the request of the Village Board of Trustees we reached out to the companies to see how we would have extra pick ups and for right now it doesn't look feasible.
- **Issac Ekstein** provided the following briefing – this was discussed a while ago in the village board in regards to emergency management ambulance, fire and all those things. Scott Ugell has been working on finding an attorney that specializes in that aspect of emergency management and he has found one, Brad Pinsky. **Scott Ugell** advised that this is public health law issues and is a very specific area. **Isaac** continued that Scott Ugell has prepared the resolution to retain Brad Pinsky, just as special council to guide the village on their emergency management.

➤ **Business**

- **Resoluion No. (018)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove granting the United Jewish Community Emergency Response Division (UJCERD) full authority to operate in the Village of South Blooming Grove. Motion to accept by Trustee Rosner, seconded by Mayor Kalaj. *5 Ayes, Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Feldman, Trustee Rosner and Trustee Guttman.*
- **Resolution No. (019)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove authoring the Mayor to enter a contract with Solitude Lake Management to provide aquatic pesticide services to Merriewold Lake. Motion to accept by Trustee Guttman, seconded by Deputy Mayor Weiss. *5 Ayes, Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Feldman, Trustee Rosner and Trustee Guttman.*
- **Resolution No.(020)-** Resolution of the village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove authorizing the Mayor to enter into contract with Marangi Carting for garbage Spring Clean Up for

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\$30.00 per household. Motion to accept by Trustee Feldman, seconded by Trustee Rosner. *5 Ayes, Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Feldman, Trustee Rosner and Trustee Guttman.*

- **Resolution No. (021)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove accepting the engagement letter from Pinsky Law Group, PLLC to assist the village with their goal with regard to emergency ambulance services. Motion to accept by Trustee Guttman, seconded by Deputy Mayor Weiss. *5 Ayes, Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Feldman, Trustee Rosner and Trustee Guttman.*
- **Resolution No. (022)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove establishing, contracting for and/or operate an ambulance service under contract, for operation within the Village Boundaries. Motion to accept by Trustee Rosner, seconded by Mayor Kalaj. *5 Ayes, Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Feldman, Trustee Rosner and Trustee Guttman.*

➤ **Trustee Comments**

- Trustee Rosner congratulated the Mayor, Deputy Mayor Weiss and Trustee Feldman for their re-election, Congratulations. All members sent congratulation on looking forward to next four years.
- A moment of silence was taken for the Ukraine.
- Mayor Kalaj thanked all those supporters that supported him, Mr. Feldman and Mr. Weiss in this election, even those people that did not support us, he thanks them for coming to vote.
- Trustee Feldman wished the Mayor a healthy happy four years.
- Trustee Guttman advised regarding the park at the Rolling Hills Ballfield, he made a contact with multiple companies and they are getting some designing, planning and pricing and gathering information and will hopefully meet this week to send some designing, planning and pricing so that they can get this job up and running and have it for this summer.
- Deputy Mayor Weiss thanked all the people who supported him, thank you.

➤ **Abstract**

- Mayor Kalaj made a motion to accept the abstract, seconded by Trustee Guttman. Motion passed *5 Ayes, Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Feldman, Trustee Rosner And Trustee Guttman*

➤ **Adjournment**

- Motion to close the meeting at 8:50pm. by Mayor Kalaj, seconded by Deputy Mayor Weiss. *5 Ayes, Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Feldman, Trustee Rosner And Trustee Guttman*

Minutes respectfully submitted by
Kerry Dougherty, Village Clerk